

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A process comprising coating a surface of a metallic object with an aqueous, acidic composition comprising:

8 to 50 g/l of phosphate, calculated as  $\text{PO}_4$ ,

0.5 to 30 g/l of zinc ions,

0 to 5 g/l of manganese ions,

0 to 8 g/l of calcium ions,

0 to 5 g/l of magnesium ions,

wherein at least 0.1 g/l of calcium or/and magnesium ions are present,

0.1 to 5 g/l of nitroguanidine,

0.1 to 10 g/l in total of chlorate or/and peroxide ions,

in total 0 to 16 g/l of complex fluoride ( $\text{MeF}_4$  or/and  $\text{MeF}_6$ ) of  $\text{Me} = \text{B}, \text{Si}, \text{Ti}, \text{Hf}$  or/and  $\text{Zr}$  and

0 to 5 g/l of fluoride ions

wherein the total content of complex fluoride and fluoride ions is in the range from 0.1 to 18 g/l and wherein the ratio of free acid to total acid is from 0.25:1 to 0.11 to 1.

Claims 2-16 (cancelled)

17. (previously presented) A process according to claim 1, wherein the composition comprises not more than 1 g/l of nitrate.

18. (previously presented) A process according to claim 1, wherein the composition comprises not more than 0.5 g/l of nitrite.
19. (previously presented) A process according to claim 1, wherein the composition comprises complex fluoride or/and fluoride ions to magnesium ions in a ratio of ( $\text{MeF}_4$ ,  $\text{MeF}_6$  or/and  $\text{F}^-$ ) : Mg in the range from 0.1 : 1 to 10 : 1.
20. (previously presented) A process according to claim 1, wherein the composition comprises complex fluoride or/and fluoride ions to calcium ions in a ratio of ( $\text{MeF}_4$ ,  $\text{MeF}_6$  or/and  $\text{F}^-$ ) : Ca in the range from 0.1 : 1 to 10 : 1.
21. (previously presented) A process according to claim 1, wherein the composition further comprises up to 2 g/l nickel ions.
22. (currently amended) A process according to claim 1, wherein ~~one of the preceding claims, characterized in that~~ the composition comprises chloride ions in the range up to 5 g/l.
23. (previously presented) A process according to claim 1, wherein the composition further comprises up to 2 g/l sulfate ions.
24. (previously presented) A process according to claim 1, wherein the composition comprises fluoroborate.
25. (previously presented) A process according to claim 24, wherein the composition comprises from 0.1 to 5 g/l  $\text{BF}_4$ .
26. (previously presented) A process according to claim 24, wherein the composition comprises from 0.2 to 3 g/l  $\text{BF}_4$ .
27. (previously presented) A process according to claim 1, wherein the pH of the composition is maintained in the range from 0.1 to 4.

28. (previously presented) A process according to claim 1, wherein a phosphate layer which has a layer thickness in the range from 0.02 to 15  $\mu\text{m}$  or/and a layer weight in the range from 0.5 to 25  $\text{g/m}^2$  is formed on said surface.

29. (previously presented). A process according to claim 1, wherein a phosphate layer which has an average edge length of the phosphate crystals of less than 20  $\mu\text{m}$  or even of less than 10  $\mu\text{m}$  and at the same time has a layer thickness with a layer weight in the range of 1.5 to 18  $\text{g/m}^2$  is formed on the surface.

30. (previously presented) A process according to claim 29, wherein the layer weight is from 2 to 15  $\text{g/m}^2$ .

31. (previously presented) A process according to claim 1, wherein after the formation of the phosphate layer at least one layer comprising lubricant is applied.

32. (previously presented) A process for coating surfaces of metallic objects with a phosphating solution, wherein the ratio of the pickling erosion on the metallic surface, measured in  $\text{g/m}^2$ , to the layer weight of the phosphate layer, measured in  $\text{g/m}^2$ , lies at values below 75% and wherein the ratio of free acid to total acid of said solution is from 0.25:1 to 0.11 to 1.

33. (previously presented) An aqueous phosphating solution comprising:

8 to 100 g/l of phosphate, calculated as  $\text{PO}_4$ ,

0.5 to 60 g/l of zinc ions,

0 to 10 g/l of manganese ions,

0 to 16 g/l of calcium ions,

0 to 10 g/l of magnesium ions,

wherein at least 0.1 g/l of calcium or/and magnesium ions are present,

0.05 to 10 g/l of nitroguanidine,

0 to 2 g/l of nitrate,  
0.1 to 10 g/l in total of chlorate or/and peroxide ions,  
in total 0 to 16 g/l of complex fluoride ( $\text{MeF}_4$  or/and  $\text{MeF}_6$ ) of  $\text{Me} = \text{B}, \text{Si}, \text{Ti}, \text{Hf}$   
or/and  $\text{Zr}$  and

0 to 5 g/l of fluoride ions

wherein the total content of complex fluoride and fluoride ions is in the range  
from 0.1 to 18 g/l and wherein the ratio of free acid to total acid is from 0.25:1 to 0.11 to 1.

34. (previously presented) A metallic object coated produced by the process of claim  
1.